

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 278774

21

ORIGIN EB-07

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COMMERCE:RFRANCIS

TREASURY:WBARREDA

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TO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION GENEVA

USDEL MTN GENEVA

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: ETRD, FI, EC

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PAGE 02 STATE 278774

SUBJECT: EC POSITION RE WAIVER FOR FINNISH-GDR

"FREE TRADE AGREEMENT"

REF: GENEVA 8213

1. GIVEN PAST EC RECOGNITION OF IMPORTANCE OF COORDINATING WITH US ON GATT HANDLING OF FINNISH-EE AGREEMENTS, WE ARE SURPRISED EC HAS TAKEN A POSITION ON A POSSIBLE WAIVER APPROACH TO THE GDR AGREEMENT UNILATERALLY. OUR INITIAL REACTION TO THE FINNISH PROPOSAL WAS THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO SEE EXACTLY WHAT THE FINNS HAD IN MIND BEFORE COMING TO FIRM CONCLUSIONS. HOWEVER, WE SAW SOME INTERESTING POSSIBILITIES IN THIS PROPOSAL, WHICH WE WOULD HAVE LIKED TO DISCUSS WITH THE EC BEFORE EITHER OF US GAVE OUR REACTIONS TO THE FINNS.

2. THESE POSSIBILITIES INCLUDED USING A FINNISH-GDR WAIVER AS A PRECEDENT TO INFLUENCE THE FINNS TO ALSO ASK FOR A WAIVER FOR THE BULGARIAN AGREEMENT, AND USING THE EXISTENCE OF A WAIVER FOR THE GDR AGREEMENT AS A DEBATING POINT IN THE WPS ON THE CZECHOSLOVAK AND HUNGARIAN AGREEMENTS.

3. WE ASSUME RELUCTANCE OF EC TO SUPPORT FINNISH WAIVER APPLICATION IS RELATED IN SOME WAY TO THE GATT PROBLEMS POSED BY VARIOUS PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENTS TO WHICH EC IS A PARTY (EC-EFTA, EC-MEDITERRANEAN, LOME). WE WOULD THINK, HOWEVER, THAT THE UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND NATURE OF THE FINNISH-EE AGREEMENTS WOULD ELIMINATE ANY PRECEDENTIAL EFFECT THEY MIGHT HAVE ON GATT HANDLING OF AGREEMENTS WITH MARKET ECONOMY COUNTRIES.

4. MISSION IS REQUESTED TO CONVEY TO APPROPRIATE COMMISSION OFFICIAL OUR SURPRISE OVER THEIR FAILURE TO CONSULT WITH US PRIOR TO TAKING A POSITION ON THE GDR WAIVER QUESTION, AND TO OBTAIN CLARIFICATION OF THE REASONING WHICH SUPPORTED THE COMMISSION'S POSITION.

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